

DULUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

Notice of Meeting

DATE: April 23, 2024

TIME: 4:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Main Library Gold Room

AGENDA

Call to order

Welcome and introductions

Review and approve agenda

Approve minutes of February 27, 2024 meeting

Reports

Library Manager's Report – Powers

Friends Report – Ramsland

Foundation Report – *No written report*

Old Business

Main Library facility update

New Business

2023 annual report

Main Library safety

Election of officers

Adjournment

Next regular meeting: May 28, 2024

Duluth Public Library Board Meeting Minutes
February 27th, 2024

Present: Bill Arezzo, Lizzy Luoma, Jose Gonzalez, Ellen Hatfield, Lori Steinbach, Matt Rosendahl

Also in attendance: Carla Powers, Sally Larson (League of Women Voters) and City Councilor Azrin Awal

Absent: Sue Henke, Michelle Foshay, Betty Ramsland

The meeting was called to order at 4:33 PM by Matt Rosendahl, Chairing

Review and approval of agenda

Motion by Arezzo, seconded by Luoma, to approve agenda as drafted. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes of the January 23rd meeting

Motion by Arezzo, seconded by Hatfield, to approve minutes as drafted. Motion passed unanimously.

Reports

Library Manager

- West Duluth Reimagined will have a celebration on Monday March 11th with speakers and a ribbon cutting. Library Foundation will send out invites by e-mail and mail. Tours of the updated space will happen at 5:00 pm.
- Library staff are working with the city's IT staff to redesign the library's website. The main page and a few inside pages are already mocked up. Colors and branding will not change. The goal of the redesign is to make the site easier to navigate.
- A new Libby collection will be purchased with a portion of the Cirrus money that the City Council allocated to the library last fall. Duluth card holders will have priority for getting holds filled from this collection. If there are no Duluth holds, the items will be open to all Arrowhead Library System patrons. The new purchases will help with the long wait times for holds. They also will allow access to more titles and more of the popular items. Library staff can run reports to see which items are the most popular. Currently most of the funding for Libby comes from the Arrowhead System.
- With the plans for the Main Library building changing somewhat, community engagement about the building is on pause. Instead, DPL and the Duluth Library Foundation will use the remaining funds to conduct a few focus groups to ask about library services. Focus group topics will include questions about barriers to library use, what type of free activities would be of interest, what makes a place feel welcoming, etc.
- Some great candidates have come forward for the .5 library technician position. The pool has been narrowed down to four. The job opening for .5 library safety specialist will be posted soon. Library is very close to being fully staffed.
- Mayor Reinert has been invited to be a special guest reader at the Wiggles for Littles program on April 13th. He accepted.

Foundation

- At the last meeting the Foundation Board discussed where to go now, considering the city administration's desire to move in a different direction than before. After discussion the board decided to support – as written – the new bonding request for \$300,000 to fund further planning and design. The board is requesting more interaction with the mayor and staff. The Library

Foundation plans to be more visible in the city as a whole to promote the library.

- The Foundation recently hosted the Olga Walker Awards Ceremony and Author Event, which has become a way to bring big name authors to town. Three people were recognized at the event for their support of the Foundation.
- April 11th is Library Giving Day at the Depot from 4 pm – 8 pm.

Friends

- Book Sale will be held June 10th – 13th. This year the Friends hope to implement credit card processing using Square.
- Other upcoming events are the Friends Annual Meeting on May 21st from 4 pm – 5 pm in the Main Library Green Room, and Round-up for the Friends at the Whole Foods Co-op in August.

Old Business

Facility Update

- A bonding request for \$300,000 has been submitted to the state. Funding will be used to study ways in which housing can be added to the library site. At the request of library advocates, language has been added to clarify that the library project also will include Workforce Development and the Duluth Police Department's Behavioral Health Unit. Both of these organizations currently operate out of leased space.

Privacy Policy

- The changes and/or additions were incorporated from the last meeting.
- Motion by Gonzalez, seconded by Hatfield, to approve new document as drafted. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Election of Officers

The election of officers will take place at next month's meeting. Both Michelle and Sue have finished their two-year terms for President and Vice President. We will need to elect new. Lori is willing to stay on as Secretary.

Usage Statistics

A board member pointed out that January 2024 library visits were more than twice the number recorded in 2023. Carla suspects there was an error in the spreadsheet formula. She will double check the attendance numbers and make sure they are correct for the next meeting.

Library has not quite gotten back to the 2019 (pre-covid) number of visitors or check outs, but program attendance is up 123%.

Ongoing Business

Advocacy

Stay tuned!

Adjournment - 5:24 PM

Manager's Report to Library Board March/April 2024

West Duluth Reimagined. The Duluth Library Foundation's celebration and open house on March 11 was exceptionally well attended. Speakers included Mayor Reinert, City Councilor Janet Kennedy, Chamber Executive Director Matt Baumgartner, and myself. Nearly everyone on the city council was in attendance, along with members of all three library supporting organizations, at least one representative from the local media, and many foundation donors.

Interlibrary Loan Limits. Due to an upcoming change in the software that runs MNLINK, the statewide interlibrary loan service, DPL will temporarily decrease the limit of active interlibrary loan requests from 10 per person to four. The lower limit went into effect March 18 and may last as long as July. The reasons for the decrease are twofold. Library staff will need to enter each outstanding request into the new system manually. Active requests will not automatically be migrated into the new software. The second reason for the reduced limit is to give ILL staff some extra capacity to train on the new system. Launch of the new software is scheduled for April 30.

Fax Service. At long last, DPL has acquired fax machines and can offer outgoing faxing service for the public. For years our only option was to utilize a free fax service online. However, the free service was not easy or intuitive to use, and there were concerns over the security of sensitive information being transmitted via the service. Library staff worked with city IT staff to come up with a better solution. Outgoing faxes are free to the public. The library does not provide incoming fax service.

Aquarium Passes. Inspired by the success of state park and zoo passes, the Great Lakes Aquarium approached DPL with the idea of providing passes to be checked out by library patrons. As of April 1, DPL now has 15 aquarium passes for checkout. The passes are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. They cannot be placed on hold. They will check out for one week with no renewals. Each pass will admit an individual or a group of up to five people to the aquarium free of charge. After a three-week soft launch, the passes are now being publicized more widely, with a mention in the library's May event guide and social media posts to follow.

National Library Week. With a theme of "Ready, Set, Library," this year's National Library Week took place April 7 through 13. In what has become a tradition over the past few years, DPL's supervisory staff put on a small staff appreciation event at each library location during the week. The Duluth Library Foundation held a Library Giving Day event at the Depot on Thursday evening, April 11. The week wrapped up with a special guest appearance by Mayor Reinert at Wiggles for Littles on April 13. Over 100 children and caregivers attended the program, and the mayor read a story to the group.

Staffing Update.

- The first round of interviews for Library Safety Specialist has wrapped up. A second round will take place in early May.
- Seventeen applications were received for a 13-hour-per-week Library Aide position. Staff is reviewing the applications, and interviews will be scheduled soon.
- A Librarian I position in adult services recently opened up after a staff member moved out of the area to accept a new job. Approval to fill the position is still pending.

**Friends of the Library Report
April 2024**

The Friends of the DPL met April 16, 2024.

Bank balance as of March 31, 2024: \$10,463 after \$10,000 given to the DPL.

Whole Foods Co-Op “round-up at the till” is August 2024; need board members to contact employees of co-op on what the Friends do, and possibly have a table at the co-op for a few days in August to speak to co-op members on Friends work.

Motion approved to donate \$250 to the DPL in the name of Wendy Williamson, former board member who was extremely active in many roles at the Friends.

We have tried to contact NEMBA (NorthEast Minnesota Book Award), but no response this year; we will try and get involved in 2025.

Upcoming events:

- Annual Meeting: May 21st @ 4:00. Speaker: Dennis Lamkin, “Bowery to Bookshelves.”
- Annual Book Sale: June 10-13.
- Sidewalk Days: July 10-12, discussion on participation.
- Spirit Valley Days: book sale at West Duluth Branch on Thursday, August 1

Submitted by Betty Ramsland